

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 27647 241924Z

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ACTION EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON PRIORITY 4305

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: NEW ORTF DIRECTOR

1. FOLLOWING COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETING OCTOBER 24, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN JEAN-PHILIPPE LECAT ANNOUNCED THAT MARCEAU LONG HAS BEEN NAMED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FRENCH NATIONAL TELEVISION NETWORK (ORTF). AT THE SAME TIME, HE ANNOUNCED THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU WOULD DISCUSS PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION TO REUCE PRESIDENTIAL TERM FROM SEVEN TO FIVE YEARS ON NATION-WIDE TELEVISION AT 8 P.M. PARIS TIME.

2. MARCEAU LONG WAS PREVIOUSLY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ADMINISTRATION AT THE MINISTRY OF ARMIES (SINCE 1967), AND PRESIDENT OF A SPECIAL COMMISSION CHARGED WITH STUDYING MILITARY HOUSING PROBLEMS SINCE 1972. HE IS 47 YEARS OLD, HAS DEGREES IN LIBERAL ARTS AND LAW, AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE ECOLE NATIONALE D'ADMINISTRATION (ENA). AFTER GRADUATING FROM ENA, HE IMMEDIATELY ENTERED THE UPPER ECHELONS OF THE CIVIL SRVICE AS AN AUDITOR AT THE COUNCIL OF STATE, WHERE HE SERVED FROM 1952 TO 1956. HE SERVED AS A TECHNICAL COUNCILLOR IN THE OFFICEOF MAURICE FAURE WHEN THE LATTER WAS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS DURING THE FOURTH REPUBLIC GOVERNMENTS OF GUY MOLLET, MAURICE BOURGES-MAUNOURY AND FELIX GAILLARD, FROM FEBRUARY 1956 TO MAY 1958. HE TAUGHT BRIEFLY IN 1958 AT THE INSTITUT D'ETUDES POLITIQUES OF PARIS

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PAGE 02 PARIS 27647 241924Z

AND AT ENA, AND THEN BECAME LEGAL ADVISOR AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY

IN MOROCCO FOLLOWING HIS TOUR IN MOROCCO, HE SPENT SIX YEARS
AS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (FONCTION PUBLIQUE)
WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE GOVERNMENT. HE IS MARRIED
TO THE FORMER JOSETTE NIEL AND HAS FIVE CHILDREN.

3. COMMENT: LONG, A SLIGHTLY LEFT-OF-CENTER GAULLIST,
IS AN ADMINISTRATOR RATHER THAN A POLITICIAN AND WAS
HANDPICKED BY PRIME MINISTER MESSMER FOR THE TOUGH ORTF JOB.
HE HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING AN EXCEPTIONALLY ABLE MANAGER AND
A PATIENT, PESUASIVE NEGOTIATOR, PARTICULARLY ADEPT AT
RECONCILING CONFLICTING POINTS OF VIEW. HE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY
CHOSEN TO "DE-POLITICIZE" THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ORTF AND,
THROUGH HIS MANAGERIAL SKILLS, TO TRY TO BRING ORDER TO THE
BYZANTINE ORTF BUREAUCRACY (SEE PARIS' TELEGRAM NO. 27518).
IRWIN

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